

BUBBLE TROUBLE: POWER AND PERSUASION IN AN ATOMISED WORLD



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ABSTRACT | "Bubble" has become a somewhat overworked term in the past year: politicians of all hues have been accused of inhabiting them, as have the mainstream media, liberal elites, and a variety of groups in the western world who stand accused of being out of touch with large swathes of society -- those who apparently voted for Brexit in the U.K. and for Trump in the US. There is some truth to this assertion, but it is also simplistic: thanks to the internet and social media, most people, including those who feel disenfranchised, inhabit some kind of conceptual bubble. The notion of us, the masses, against them, the detached elites, is far more complex: it is a world of colliding and merging bubbles. "Bubble Trouble" is a talk about this complex reality, focusing on how it works in the ultimate Bubble: Brussels.

BIO | Dr Ilana Bet-El is a writer, historian and Senior Policy Advisor, based in Brussels. With a background in both academia and the media, she spent several years in the UN, focusing upon the Balkans; her final position was as Senior Advisor on the Balkans. She has published widely on issues related to the EU, European identity, security, defence and history. She is a card carrying member of the Brussels Bubble.